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ABSTRACT

Project CHOICE is described, which is an initiative of the New York City Public Schools to provide limited-English-proficient (LEP) Spanish-speaking and Haitian Creole/French-speaking students with instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL); Native Language Arts (NLA); and bilingual content area, career education, and computer subjects. The project was implemented at Fort Hamilton High School (Brooklyn) and Springfield Gardens High School (Queens) with funding from Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In 1989-90, the second program year, Project CHOICE served 377 students, and was considered fully implemented. The students came from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Central America, South America, and Haiti. In addition to academic, career, and computer subjects for students, non-instructional services were offered, including staff development, parental involvement, and dropout prevention. One school was able to provide a fully equipped computer resource center for these students; the other had a fully equipped bilingual enrichment center. The program met the following objectives: (1) ESL, (2) NLA, (3) career education, (4) staff development, (5) parental involvement, and (6) dropout prevention. It partially met the content area objectives. Recommendations were made to enhance bilingual science education and bilingual counseling. One table of statistical data summarizes student achievement. (SLD)

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OREA Report

CHOOSING OPTIONAL INFUSED CAREER EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN HIGH SCHOOL BILINGUAL PROGRAMS

(PROJECT CHOICE)

Grant Number: T003A80102

1989-90

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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8/90

CHOOSING OPTIONAL INFUSED CAREER EDUCATION FOR
STUDENTS IN HIGH SCHOOL BILINGUAL PROGRAMS
(PROJECT CHOICE)
1989-90

SUMMARY

- Project CHOICE was fully implemented. During the 1989-90 school year, students received instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), Native Language Arts (N.L.A.), the bilingual content areas, and career education. Noninstructional services included staff development, parental involvement, and dropout prevention.

- The project met its objectives in E.S.L., N.L.A., career education, staff development, parental involvement, and dropout prevention. It partially met the content area objective.

Project CHOICE completed its second year of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII funding at Fort Hamilton High School in Brooklyn and Springfield Gardens High School in Queens. The project offered 377 Spanish-speaking and Haitian Creole/French-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP) the opportunity to study academic, career, and computer subjects. This year, Fort Hamilton High School was able to provide a fully equipped computer resource center for these students. Springfield Gardens High School has had a fully equipped bilingual enrichment center since the first year of the project.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendations:

- Hire a bilingual Haitian Creole science teacher for advanced classes at Springfield Gardens High School.

- If feasible, share itinerant bilingual counselors with other programs.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA's) evaluation of Project CHOICE. The project completed its second year of funding under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.). Project CHOICE provided Spanish-speaking and Haitian Creole/French-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP) with instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.); Native Language Arts (N.L.A.); and content area, career education, and computer subjects. The project operated at Fort Hamilton High School in Brooklyn and Springfield Gardens High School in Queens.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

The project admitted 377 students to the program during the course of the year. Of this number, 269 attended both semesters, 73 attended fall only, and 35 attended spring only. (Total fall attendance was 342; total spring attendance was 304.)

The students came from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Central and South America, and Haiti. Many read below grade level in their native language and had little previous exposure to English. The students averaged eight years of education in their native country and two and one-half years in the United States. Most students came from poor families; some suffered from malnutrition. The parents of some had returned to their native countries, leaving the students in the care of relatives. Many of the students had to work to help support their families; many cared for younger siblings.

STAFF

Title VII partially funded two bilingual career/resource specialists with Bachelor's degrees, one of whom spoke Spanish and the other Haitian Creole. Two bilingual educational assistants, five part-time bilingual curriculum specialists (two with doctorates, two with master's degrees, and one with two bachelor's degrees), and two part-time consultants made up the rest of the staff. Two grade advisors and other school guidance personnel were available to participating students.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

At Fort Hamilton High School, the program offered eight levels of E.S.L. instruction, the first and second levels for three periods daily, higher levels for two periods daily. Springfield Gardens High School offered three levels of E.S.L., each for three periods daily.

Fort Hamilton High School offered ten levels of Spanish N.L.A.; Springfield Gardens High School offered Haitian Creole N.L.A. at the first and second level and French/Haitian Creole Studies at eight levels.

Content area courses were offered in either the native language, bilingually, or taught using E.S.L. methodology. At Fort Hamilton High School, content courses included health, mathematics, science, and social studies. At Springfield Gardens High School, content courses included mathematics, science, social studies, and keyboarding. In addition, this year the

program offered computer assisted instruction at both sites both in school and in after school tutorials. The project infused career education into classroom instruction and offered career conferences. Students also participated in cultural activities.

The project provided guidance and support services to participating students, although service was limited by the lack of bilingual guidance counselors at each site. Project staff also conducted activities for both staff and curriculum development and for parental involvement.

III. OUTCOMES

INSTRUCTIONAL

English as a Second Language

- As a result of participation in the program, program students will make statistically significant gains in English language proficiency.

Matching data were available for 222 students. The mean gain was 4.0 Normal Curve Equivalents (N.C.E.s) (s.d.=11.1), and analysis indicated a significant ($p<.05$) improvement between pretest and posttest scores on the LAB.

The project met its E.S.L. objective.

Native Language Arts

- As a result of participating in the program, the Spanish-dominant participants will demonstrate a significant increase in Spanish-language achievement, as indicated by improvement at the .05 level of statistical significance when results of a teacher-made instrument are analyzed using a correlated *t*-test.

Pretest/posttest scores were not provided, therefore OREA could not assess this objective as proposed. However, an

analysis of student performance in Spanish N.L.A. courses revealed that 74 percent of the 148 students for whom data were available in the fall and 74 percent of 140 students in the spring achieved a passing grade of at least 65. Therefore the project met its first N.L.A. objective.

- As a result of participating in the program, the Haitian Creole-dominant participants will demonstrate a significant increase in native-language achievement, as indicated by improvement at the .05 level of statistical significance when results of a teacher-made instrument are analyzed using a correlated t-test.

The project did not develop an instrument to measure students' native language improvement in Haitian Creole, therefore OREA could not evaluate this objective as stated. An analysis of student performance in Haitian Creole N.L.A. courses, however, revealed that 96 percent of the 49 students for whom data were available in the fall and 81 percent of 43 students in the spring achieved a passing grade of at least 65. Participating students demonstrated an increase in native language achievement in Haitian Creole, indicating that the project did meet its second N.L.A. objective.

Content Area Subjects

- As a result of participation in the program, 75 percent of the students will achieve a passing grade in the subject areas of mathematics, science, and social studies.

Science was the only subject area in which 75 percent of the students obtained a passing grade, and this was only in the fall semester. (See Table 1.) Just under the anticipated percentage passed mathematics in the spring. Project CHOICE partially met its content area objective.

TABLE 1

Student Achievement in Content Area Courses

Subject	Fall Semester		Spring Semester	
	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Number of Students	Percent Passing
Mathematics	265	66.8	264	73.1
Science	184	76.6	167	70.1
Social Studies	282	70.2	260	60.4

- Between 60 and 77 percent of participating students passed their content area courses in mathematics, science, and social studies.

Career Education

- As a result of the program, all project students will participate in at least two career education conferences.

Project students at Fort Hamilton High School participated in career education conferences at Kingsborough and Borough of Manhattan Community Colleges. At Springfield Gardens High School, program students attended a career workshop at Laurelton Public Library and three career conferences. Program students at all sites also attended a Bilingual Career Day at York College and a career conference at Louis D. Brandeis High School.

The program met its career education objective.

NONINSTRUCTIONAL

Dropout Prevention

- As a result of participation in the program, the dropout rate of program students will be 10 to 15 percent lower than that of mainstream students.

Both sites provided services for potential dropouts. Some students at Fort Hamilton High School participated in the Saturday Partnership Program, a statewide initiative targeting high school students. At Fort Hamilton High School the program students' dropout rate was 0.2 percent and the mainstream dropout rate was 9.5 percent: the program students' dropout rate was 98 percent lower than that of mainstream students. At Springfield Gardens High School the program students' dropout rate was 1.4 percent and the mainstream dropout rate was 4.2 percent; therefore, the program students' dropout rate was 67 percent lower than that of mainstream students. The program met its dropout prevention objective.

Staff Development

- Ninety percent of the program staff will demonstrate professional growth by completing college courses and/or completing staff training workshops.

One hundred percent of program staff completed college courses and staff training workshops. The project therefore met its staff development objective.

Parental Involvement

- The attendance of parents of program students at school functions will be ten to 15 percent higher than that of parents of mainstream students.

Parents at both sites were supportive of the program. The

attendance rate of parents of program students was 30 percent higher than that of parents of mainstream students. The program easily met its parental involvement objective.

FOLLOW-UP OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

During the year, 20 students left the program and transferred to another school. Twenty-nine students graduated and four students dropped out. Thirty-five students left the United States and 24 students were fully mainstreamed. No student had been mainstreamed prior to the start of the current year. Ten percent of the students at both sites achieved Honor Roll/Arista status because of their high cumulative averages (over 85).

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The program's strength lay in its strikingly lower dropout rate and higher parental attendance in comparison to the mainstream. Limitations to program success were the lack of bilingual guidance counselors at both sites and the lack of a bilingual science teacher for advanced classes at Springfield Gardens High School.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendations:

- Hire a bilingual Haitian Creole science teacher for advanced classes at Springfield Gardens High School.
- If feasible, share itinerant bilingual counselors with other programs.